DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 385 494 SP 036 115

AUTHOR Riordan, G. P.

TITLE Teachers' Perceptions of Collaboration and Clinical Supervision.

PUB DATE Apr 95

NOTE 20p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (San Francisco, CA, April 18-22, 1995).

PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS Beginning Teachers; *Clinical Supervision (of Teachers); Cooperative Planning; *Educational Cooperation; Elementary Education; *Faculty Development; Foreign Countries; Participative Decision Making; *Partnerships in Education; *Teacher Administrator Relationship; Teacher Supervision; Teaching Experience; Teaching Methods; *Team Teaching

IDENTIFIERS Canada; *Collaborative Teaching

ABSTRACT

This paper reports on a study of teachers involved in a collaborative model of clinical supervision. Study participants were interviewed in order to ascertain their perceptions of their collaborative relationship and the focus and effect of their collaboration. The study found that the most effective collaborations were characterized by relationships that were mutually rewarding, equally valued, and based on similar and/or complimentary professional and social strengths and interests. All participants reported that the collaborative approach to supervision was worthwhile, although in the partnerships where the development of mutuality, trust, and friendship were at an early stage, teachers were less inclined to find or to make time to work with their partner or to focus on aspects of their teaching that involved risk-taking. Five recommendations for research and practice are offered: (1) administrators should be aware of the extra difficulties partners may experience in working collaboratively; (2) administrators wishing to encourage collaborative clinical supervision partnerships to meet professional development goals should develop a system that allows teachers to have some input in the selection of partners, provide adequate time for conferencing, and notice and encourage teachers' collaborative efforts; (3) teachers wishing to develop relationships with their colleagues should be aware of the powerful norms of teacher autonomy and isolation; (4) researchers should address the issue of gender in collaborative relationships between teachers; and (5) practitioners and researchers should incorporate the notion of collaboration as work-focused friendship in their thinking about collaboration. (Contains 14 references.) (ND)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 385 494

Teachers' Perceptions of Collaboration and Clinical Supervision

G. P. Riordan

Department of Educational Policy Studies
University of Alberta
Edmonton, Canada T6G 2G5

A paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association

San Francisco, CA

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

G. P. Riordan

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)"

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

April 1995

SB 36115

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Abstract

Collaborative approaches to clinical supervision have been touted with increasing regularity in the literature as effective means of teacher professional development. Teachers who were involved in a collaborative model of clinical supervision were interviewed in order to ascertain their perceptions of their collaborative relationship and the focus and effect of their collaboration. This study found that the most effective collaborations were characterised by relationships that were mutually rewarding, equally valued, and based on similar and / or complimentary professional and social strengths and interests. All participants reported that the collaborative approach to supervision was worthwhile, although in the partnerships where the development of mutuality, trust, and friendship were at an early stage, teachers were less inclined to find or make time to work with their partner or to focus on aspects of their teaching that involved risk-taking. Five recommendations for research and practice are offered.

Teachers' Perceptions of Collaboration and Clinical Supervision[1]

This paper reports on an interpretative study conducted in Alberta, Canada during a six month period between September 1994 and February 1995. Ten teachers, who were engaging in collaborative clinical supervision for professional development purposes, volunteered to share their experiences with the researcher. Of interest in this research was how teachers who collaborate in a clinical supervision dyad understand their partnership and how these understandings relate to the perceived value and effectiveness of their work.

Literature Review

Clinical supervision has its origins in the work of Cogan (1973) and Goldhammer, Anderson, and Krajewski (1980). Clinical supervision involves three phases: planning conference, classroom observation, and feedback conference. Acheson and Gall (1992, p.11) stated that clinical supervision focusses on the improvement of instruction by means of systematic, planned observation and analysis of actual teaching performance. Sergiovanni and Starratt (1993) described clinical supervision as "a partnership in inquiry shared by the teacher and the supervisor that is intended to help teachers modify existing patterns of teaching in ways that make sense to them" (p. 287). Krajewski (1993) was of the view that clinical supervision involved the cultivation of positive attitudes held by the teacher toward the process, the development of trust, the establishment of a non-threatening environment, and the development of a mutual rapport.

Recent literature on clinical supervision has dealt with the potential of collaborative partnerships to enhance the utility of clinical supervision. In her report on a peer-assistance program, Chrisco (1989) concluded that the program helped the teachers overcome the artificial limits of isolation (p. 32). Sergiovanni (1992) discussed the potential of collegial practices to overcome teacher isolation and to create a culture of professional collegiality. Raney and Robbins (1989) in their description of collaborative practices concluded that where peer sharing and caring have occurred, reflection has followed, passivity has been challenged, appreciation of others has increased, and feelings of isolation have been replaced by "an environment of collaboration" (p. 38). Anderson (1993) in the conclusion to his historical review of the

---

[1] The assistance of Dr. J. L. da Costa and the participation of the teachers in this study are gratefully acknowledged. Also I acknowledge the travel assistance provided by the J. Gordin Kaplan Graduate Student Award, the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, and the Vice President (Research) of the University of Alberta.

literature on clinical supervision noted that collaborative approaches apparently have "many beneficial side effects, such as breakdown of the self-contained isolation of teachers . . ." (p. 19).

The understanding of collaboration used in this research is derived from the work of three authors. Glickman (1990) stated that the "purpose of collaboration is to solve problems through a meeting of minds of equals. True equality is the core of collaboration" (p. 145). Second, it is informed by Krajewski's (1993) notions of the importance of the development of trust, the establishment of a non-threatening environment, and the development of a mutual rapport. Finally, Little's (1990) differentiation between forms of collaboration--storytelling and scanning through to joint work--is considered valuable. A synthesis of these insights leads to a definition of collaboration as a set of work relationships that can be differentiated in terms of: (a) their equality, (b) trust, and (c) focus.

The act of collaborating with a colleague is widely believed to lead to improved teaching and student learning. By facilitating reflection, collaboration leads to improvements and changes in instruction (Oberg, 1989). Direct links between collaborative clinical supervision and improved student learning are still tentative, however Acheson and Gall (1992, p. 19) argued that it is reasonable to assume that there is a strong link between the two.

Problems with Clinical Supervision and Collaboration

Establishing collaborative clinical supervision relationships is difficult. Glickman (1990) stated that his "work with collaboration shows that it is a deceptively simple set of behaviours for supervisors to understand" (p. 144). Later he noted that a "difficulty in working collaboratively occurs when the teacher (or group) believes a supervisor is manipulating a decision when in fact he or she is not" (p. 145). Outlining a number of problems he saw with clinical supervision, including the observation that experienced teachers are justified in judging certain supervisory attitudes and behaviours to be patronizing, Starratt (1992) asked: "Why do we not do more research with veteran teachers' assessments of supervisors in order to discover why the practice of supervision has been such a colossal failure?" The difficulty experienced by supervisors when they attempt to work in collaboration with teachers may be due, in part, to an underestimation on the part of supervisors of the complexity of developing collaborative relationships.

The Objective of This Study

The objective of this study, therefore, was to examine collaboration by exploring teachers' perceptions. Thinking about the issues raised above in the literature, the following research question was posed: What are teachers' perceptions of their collaborative partnerships and what is the relationship between these perceptions and the focus and outcomes of their collaborative clinical supervision experiences?

Method

An interpretative approach was chosen to explore the experiences of teachers who work in collaboration with a teaching partner. This subsection is divided into four sections: (a) participants, (b) data gathering, (c) data analysis, and (d) trustworthiness.

Participants

A purposive sampling technique was used in this study. Ten volunteers participated. These participants worked in three, urban, western Canadian schools, identified in this paper by the pseudonyms--Vivaldi, Descartes, and Morrison. Vivaldi and Descartes are traditional schools in a large public school district. Morrison is an independent school that caters to students with special needs. At Morrison instruction is provided by a team consisting of a teacher, junior teacher or teacher aide, and a qualified speech therapist. Information about the participants is summarized in Table 1. The two teachers in each partnership have been given pseudonyms that start with the same letter to aid the reader in identifying the partner of each teacher as they are quoted or discussed later in this paper.

Data Gathering

This research was planned in collaboration with a colleague who was interested in exploring issues of trust in collaborative relationships. The two researchers planned and conducted the data gathering from three sources. The first involved two rounds of semi-structured interviews with each of the participants. The interviews were conducted by both researchers using a common schedule containing questions addressing both research topics. Data were also gathered from transcripts of taped conferences between the participating teachers. Finally, research notes and observations were made by both researchers. These were recorded in journal form. The researchers discussed these observations frequently throughout the research.

TABLE 1. Schools, Experience, Designation, and Partners of Participants.

Teacher	*Length & type of partnership*	*School*	*Designation*	*Notes*
Joan	< 1 yr Appointed partner	Morrison K-9 Special Ed.	Team Teacher	First-year Teacher
Jill	< 1 yr Appointed partner	Morrison K-9 Special Ed.	Team Teacher	Experienced Teacher
Kate	> 1 yr Elected partner	Morrison K-9 Special Ed.	Team Teacher	Experienced Teacher
Karen	> 1 yr Elected partner	Morrison K-9 Special Ed.	Principal & Team Teacher	Experienced Teacher
Sharon	< 1 yr Appointed partner	Morrison K-9 Special Ed.	Team Teacher - Speech Expert	First year at the school
Sandra	< 1 yr Appointed partner	Morrison K-9 Special Ed.	Team Teacher	Experienced Teacher
Robert	> 1 yr Elected partner	Vivaldi Elementary	Grade 2 Music Expertise	Experienced Teacher
Rosie	> 1 yr Elected partner	Vivaldi Elementary	Grade 5 Art Expertise	Experienced Teacher
Francine	> 1 yr Elected partner	Descartes Elementary	Assist. Principal Teacher-Librarian	Experienced Teacher
Fiona	>1 yr Elected partner	Descartes Elementary	Teacher	Experienced Teacher

The first round of interviews were conducted in November, 1994 before teachers had engaged in their first "round" of collaboration. Interviews were held after school at the school sites. At these interviews, teachers were asked to describe how they had met their partners, how long they had known each other, how they worked together, and their understanding of collaboration

The second round of interviews proceeded after the teachers had completed their audio-taped conference. At these interviews specific questions relating to the conferences and earlier interviews were addressed. A stimulated recall technique was employed. Teachers were asked to share their understandings of what they had gained from the clinical supervision cycle, who had made the decisions and taken the lead during the cycle, and finally, what concerns or criticisms they had of the collaborative supervision process.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The veracity of the data was tested through a process of member checks where transcripts were returned to teachers. 'All the teachers attested to the accuracy of the transcripts and no one requested that any data be omitted.

Data Analysis

Interview and conference data were analyzed to identify themes. At the first stage of analysis individual transcripts were coded for themes independently of other transcripts. During this stage of analysis, the researcher collaborated with the colleague who had helped to gather the data. When all data had been coded, the transcripts were further analyzed so that themes could be compared and categories developed. Comparison and categorization were deliberately delayed until phase two of the analysis to maintain the integrity of each participants' insights and understandings.

Of particular interest during the second phase of the analysis was a comparison of the understandings held by of the individuals in each partnership. Similarities and differences were noted. Finally these sets of understandings were compared among the five teams and, again, similarities and differences noted.

Trustworthiness

Interviews and conferences were audio-taped and transcribed. The participants were asked to check the accuracy of the transcripts and were given the opportunity to exercise their right of veto. The two researchers, who cooperated in gathering data for this study, met frequently to discuss the study and plan questions for future interviews. Data analysis was completed individually by the two researchers and then findings, conclusions, and observations were shared and critiqued.

This latter strategy proved useful as both researchers were familiar with the data and felt that the two research projects were strengthened by the sharing of observations and by the challenges involved in defending particular interpretations and classifications of themes. This method of collaborative research is commended to other researchers.

Triangulation was employed as data and emerging themes from the interviews were compared with data and themes from the transcripts of the conferences, and observations recorded in a journal by the researcher.

The Teachers' Experiences and Understandings of Collaboration

The findings are presented for each partnership in turn. During this section, themes and issues are identified and discussed as they arise for each of the partnerships. At the conclusion of this section, a general discussion is undertaken wherein comparisons and generalizations are presented, and the general research question is addressed in the light of the findings. Quotes from the transcripts are referenced by their page and line numbers in the collated transcript.

Sandra and Sharon

For Sandra and Sharon, collaboration meant joint planning, working together, sharing expertise, learning from each other, and developing new ideas. Sandra thought that "it should be an enjoyable process and be more efficient at getting things done" (p. 87: 20-21). She felt that in order for collaboration to be effective "it has to be with someone you feel you can work with very comfortably" (p. 87: 29-30). Sharon did not mention the notion of comfort, instead she commented that collaboration occasionally led to frustration, when hectic time schedules, and other work demands, meant that they had not been able to plan their work in a coordinated manner. "Until you get co-ordinated its better to do things in isolation" (p. 81: 11-12).

Both teachers felt that they learned from each others' expertise. However neither teacher mentioned what that learning entailed, although Sharon said she hoped to receive help with some management concerns (p. 83: 35-47).

The teachers said that the focus of their collaborative efforts was shared planning and sharing expertise (see pp. 82, 86). Both acknowledged the others' expertise in specific areas and both commented on how they complemented each other with their skills. For these teachers, in their first year of working together as colleagues, there was little evidence of that mutuality, trust, or the sense of shared responsibility had developed to the extent that it had for Francine and Fiona or Robert and Rosie.

Although this finding is based on a consideration of the transcripts as a whole, certain comments made by the teachers support the finding. For instance, the above quote where Sharon stated that she did not want to collaborate because she was not organized (see p. 81: 11-12) was made in the process of explaining why they had not collaborated more fully: "So it's been frustrating because while we're trying our best to meet each other's goals and address everything, we haven't been able to do that yet" (p. 81: 20-22). Also, when asked generally about collaboration, Sandra spoke in abstract terms, whereas others in the study were able to talk

specifically about their collaboration with their partner. For instance, she mused: "collaboration would [pause] there would be enjoyment of collaboration, it should be an enjoyable process and be more efficient at getting things done, making it more of a nice process because you are working with someone you like to work with" (p. 87: 19-22).

These teachers were working on coordinating their work in the classroom but had not yet found support from each other, although Sharon was able to identify where she would like such support and Sandra was able to explain that she would need to feel comfortable with a person in order to collaborate effectively. These teachers had different expectations of collaboration, perceived their relationship differently, and had different needs to be met.

Joan and Jill

Joan and Jill described their collaboration in terms of joint planning, and equal responsibility. For Jill collaboration also involved mentoring her less experienced colleague. This was apparent in the conference between the two teachers where Jill directed the meeting and offered advice and reassurance. When asked about this, Joan acknowledged that Jill had led their meeting but stated that she could "partake in being the leader and having Jill just helping out" (p. 101: 45-46). This suggested that Joan saw that her role in the collaboration as that of a helper. Passivity in collaboration was not seen by Joan to be a barrier to a sense of equality. Joan stated on numerous occasions that she felt that she was Jill's equal (see p. 108: 1-2, 39-40, 47-49).

For Joan collaboration was a way of lessening the load and learning. Joan mentioned that it was important to make time, to "throw in ideas" (p. 101: 12). These understandings were not shared by Jill. Joan spoke highly of the value of her work with Jill. Acknowledging that Jill's experience gave her an "edge over me" (p. 44: 11), Joan thought that both the advice and positive feedback Jill gave her were "wonderful."

While they shared teaching responsibilities and said they saw each other as equals, the relationship between these teachers was different from the others in the study in that there was a significant difference in experience because of the fact that Joan was in her first year of teaching.

For Joan, being comfortable with her partner was also seen as being important, although when describing her feelings during the conference she said she initially felt awkward. The focus of their observations and conferences was on technical aspects of pupil management. This was an issue of concern for Joan she saw these conferences as opportunities to learn. This is not

to suggest that Jill did not learn or benefit from the relationship or its management focus. She cited an instance where she had found Joan's observation enlightening and supportive: "some of the things that I thought I wasn't handling really well, Joan thought I handled really well. So that kind of changed my perspective" (p. 36: 22-23). She also acknowledged that she had learnt about how to deal more effectively with a particular pupil after observing Jill.

Francine and Fiona

Both Francine and Fiona understood collaboration as an extension of their personal friendship. Francine, who was the assistant principal at Descartes, explained: ". . . because I knew her personally and she wouldn't feel that administrative relationship . . . we made sure . . . that that has never become an issue between the two of us. . . . She wouldn't feel that I was in there evaluating her" (p. 81:8-16). Francine described that she had an arrangement with the principal whereby the principal would be responsible for Fiona's evaluations. Francine clearly felt that her personal and professional relationships with Fiona were worth protecting from any avoidable threats.

As a consequence of their friendship, Francine felt that Fiona would be free to tell her if she did not want to be involved in the clinical supervision process: "if she didn't want to do it, she would tell me and if she wanted to do it she would say sure. She'd be honest about it" (p. 72:38-39). Fiona also gave an indication of the quality of their friendship when she stated:

> Well it's reassuring that I can trust her to come and observe me and . . . [I'm not] . . . nervous and scared because . . . I trust her and she trusts me and if there was a big panic we'd help each other, it wouldn't [be] you did bad or something. (p. 122:4-6)

Collaboration was valued by both Francine and Fiona as an opportunity to try new things (pp. 72, 73, 78). These teachers also valued the support and advice that they gained from working together. This was evident in the following statement, where Fiona was speaking about their post-conference:

> Well you get to rehash what you have done and you get to feel good about the things you did in the lesson and, well, there's always something that you can improve and you can discuss that, but not in an overpowering manner that is going to degrade you. (p. 123:29-31)

These teachers did not distinguish between their joint work--collaboration--and the exercise of their friendship. While their friendship involved much more than their work relationship, the shared interest in improving their instructional skills and experimenting with new approaches were an integral part of their relationship.

The focus of the collaboration between Francine and Fiona was classroom instruction. They observed each other and gathered data pertaining to management strategies. While this focus was similar to the focus of Joan and Jill's collaboration, there were several important distinctions. First, Francine and Fiona purposely chose to be observed in situations where they knew there were management problems. As Francine explained, "I'd like her to look at the class . . . that's really unruly" (p. 115: 27-28). Second, comparing the conference transcripts and subsequent interviews, Francine and Fiona shared fewer affirming comments and offered more suggestions. Third, Francine offered general comments and observations outside the pre-arranged focus for the observation and these were dealt with in a matter-of-fact manner which suggested a high level of trust. Commenting on an instance where this occurred, Francine said "So I didn't want to bring anything like that up. But she did, she said oh, I should have been more organized with this or that" (p. 115: 13-14).

Kate and Karen

Kate and Karen described their collaboration in positive terms. Kate spoke generally of collaboration, with other members of her team, as an opportunity to offer and receive advice in a non-threatening manner. For her, working closely with peers had presented some difficulties in the past. As she explained:

> . . . just to be able to discuss things that might be bothering me is difficult. I think of it as confrontation and I feel like throwing up. So with this collaborative model that we have this year the communication is so much more open. When I was first here I found it very difficult, I was very intimidated but now its like we're all on an equal level and what everybody says is fair game. (p. 97: 34 - 39)

Not surprisingly then, in this study where she worked with Karen the principal, Kate mentioned that she found the experience to be "like the evaluation thing" (p. 33: 50 -51) in the initial stages. During the second interview she described how the spectre of evaluation had dimmed and had been replaced by more positive and affirming feelings. She attributed this transition to the positive approach that Karen had adopted.

Karen described collaboration in terms of its focus. Where the teachers discussed above had explained the processes and feelings associated with collaboration, Karen spoke of the children. For her, the purpose of collaboration was to create the best possible learning program for each student in the school. In order to do so, teachers, administrators, specialists, and parents needed to work together.

Karen and Kate had a friendship that existed beyond their shared school life. The existence of this friendship was mentioned by Karen and was cited by her as an important reason for the success of her collaboration with Kate. For her part, Kate did not mention this friendship. As we have seen, Kate had difficulty with the process because of the overtones of evaluation. While Karen was responsible for Kate's formal evaluations, she did comment that she wished that she did not have to evaluate the teachers at the school: "I'd like to do away with the summative evaluations altogether and encourage everybody to do this kind of self improvement" (p. 28: 33 - 35).

Karen said that she was concerned that Kate had not taken more initiative in the planning and post conferences. She also noted that Kate seemed to be disinclined to commit herself to the process. She thought that this was due mainly to the time constraints. Acknowledging that Kate was very busy, Karen had spent several hours after school preparing the observation data for presentation at their post-conference. Karen assumed that Kate would be comfortable working with her because of their friendship. She did not seem to anticipate that Kate would have difficulty with the issue of evaluation. If she did, she chose not to disclose this in the interviews.

These differences suggest that there are several levels of collaboration involving differing degrees of trust and confidence that become evident in a close examination of what teachers do when they collaborate. At the most general level of analysis, one could conclude that differing perceptions of trustworthiness between the two partnerships were not related to the focus of the collaboration. However, closer examination of the data reveals that while two partnerships may choose to examine a similar issue, they vary considerably in the degree of risk taking, mutuality, and openness they exhibit in their treatment of the issue.

Exploring this notion further, and considering the transcripts of the interviews in total, we see that while the establishment of trust was still in the emerging stages, Kate took a more passive role in the conference and she found it difficult to make time for her collaborative work. Karen, unaware of the possible reasons for Kate's passivity, was left to conclude that "sometimes I think that it would be good for her to really initiate the thoughts" (p. 28: 9).

Rosie and Robert

When Robert arrived at Vivaldi he found a colleague with different subject-matter and pedagogical expertise but similar professional interests. Rosie, the music specialist, began to work with Robert when the two were required to stage the annual Christmas concert. They have developed a close personal and professional friendship in the ensuing two years. As an

observer, it has been difficult to distinguish between the exercise of their professional collaboration and their personal friendship. In this instance, differentiation between aspects of their relationship would not only be arbitrary, it would inevitably misrepresent their experiences.

Their relationship was exercised in the midst of a "very hectic schedule" (Rosie, p. 1: 19). Rosie understood their relationship to be supportive, student focussed, affirming, and educative. She said she felt comfortable with Robert and she was not surprised that they worked well together because "he's a real positive kind of guy and when you have a positive attitude, I think anything can work" (p. 13: 12 - 13). She went on to explain that "if you have a positive attitude and . . . you fit well that way . . you sort of just watch all these things happen. Its almost a joy to watch. Its almost like it takes you beyond . . . [yourself]" (p. 13: 17 - 20). This notion of expanding personal horizons was mentioned on numerous occasions by both teachers.

Both Rosie and Robert felt that their skills and insights were complementary. For them, collaboration was a means of sharing these skills and insights and it resulted in richer and more meaningful work. Tasks were shared--teaching and planning--and they "kicked around a lot of ideas" (p. 65: 18). These teachers' enthusiasm for joint-work was infectious, as we will see, it influenced their students as well.

As previously mentioned, Robert and Rosie valued their collaborative work. They both found support and inspiration from working with their partner. In this partnership it seems that the enthusiasm and positive approach of these teaches was reinforced by the benefits that accrued as a result of their collaboration. Robert put it succinctly when he stated that he valued collaboration because "it is a way to help me as a teacher, because I can get ideas from her and I can also learn something" (p. 65: 49 - 50).

Robert and Rosie did not confine their collaboration to the clinical supervision cycles. They worked together at every opportunity, and while they mentioned that lack of time was an obstacle they were able to overcome this constraint by meeting after school and during lunch breaks. Further evidence of the high value they placed on working together became apparent when they described how they had been combining their classes so that the students could work together. Following these combined classes, Robert and Rosie met and discussed how the students interacted. They discussed issues of sharing and trust as they emerged for the students.

Another issue of importance for these teachers was the response of the school administration to their collaboration. Robert and Rosie mentioned that they received

encouragement from the principal for the collaborative approach that they had developed. This was an important fillip for their activities.

Commenting generally about teaching and his own experiences from 15 years in the profession, Robert was aware of barriers to collaboration. In the following passage he touched on issues of autonomy, isolation, gender differences, school culture, risk taking, and professional growth:

> I don't think I am a teacher who has worked really closely with one other teacher, the way I see some teachers do. I think men don't do that either as much as maybe I see some women do, especially when they have been in schools for a while. . . . Team teaching, depending on the school, can be a very . . .[superficial] thing. I never really had my ear to the tracks, I was just in the classroom . . . I wasn't that politically astute . . .. Now as I'm getting a little older, I think . . . if you're going to succeed at something, you need the help of other people . . . [but] . . . when you get to know somebody really well, another teacher, I think you're assuming a bit of a risk. Always a chance, it seems to me, that someone could say something that . . . could jeopardize your working relationship, or perhaps the political lay of the ground doesn't allow for working relationships that much of that type in the that school. So you assume a bit of a professional risk--working with someone closely I think. . . . But I think it works well: I think I have lost out by not doing it sooner in a sense. If I thought my Art was weak, I've been teaching for 15 years, I've certainly had lots of time to fix it. And sometimes you can't pay attention to everything . But you think, gee, I should have done this sooner. So it kind of teaches you what you have missed and that's not always easy to face. (p. 12: 14 - 45)

Robert's understanding points to the complexity of collaborative relationships when they are experienced at a level of sharing described by Little (1990) as joint-work. It seems that in order to develop this level of collaboration, Robert and Rosie have had to address a number of constraints. These constraints operate at a personal, professional, and organizational level.

The depth, breadth, and frequency of collaboration between Robert and Rosie distinguished their partnership from the others in this study. They worked together on numerous tasks, including: planning, teaching, observing each other and giving feedback, conferencing, developing resources and teaching aids, and relieving or assisting their partner when he or she was overwhelmed by the hectic work load. Their joint-work was conducted in a positive and open manner and they found social and professional support and reassurance in their friendship.

Discussion and Conclusions

This discussion focusses on several issues that have emerged from the findings. These are considered in the light of current literature. This section concludes with a consideration of these findings in terms of the initial research question.

Developing Trust and Overcoming Concerns About Evaluation

In three partnerships--Sharon and Sandra, Joan and Jill, and Kate and Karen--at least one of the teachers in each pairing expressed concerns about evaluation or close scrutiny. This was surprising because in these pairings their partners were either a peer, personal friend, or an inexperienced teacher seeking advice and support. The comparative absence of risk taking and mutuality in the these partnerships was also surprising given the positive manner in which all of the participants described their collaboration.

In the literature review we saw that collaborative models were offered as a means of overcoming the norms of isolation and autonomy. Anderson' (1993) observation that collaboration helped to break down the isolation of teachers (p. 19) needs to be tempered by the caveats that this may be a gradual process, and may not be as effective for all teachers. It seems that the norms of isolation and autonomy are difficult to change.

For the teachers in this study, simply working with a peer did not remove all the obstacles to effective collaboration and conversely, the pairing of an administrator and a teacher did not present insurmountable constraints. This finding supports the premises, assumptions and potential value of differentiated models of staff development and supervision, such as that offered by Glatthorn (1984).

Gender and Collaboration

In this study, 9 of the 10 participants were women, and the one man, Robert, commented that he thought women were more inclined to collaborate and work closely with other teachers. This is an area that warrants more attention in the literature.

Time

All the teachers in this study mentioned that time was a significant constraint. The four teachers who had the most broadly based and energetic collaborations--Francine and Fiona, and Rosie and Robert--overcame this constraint by working together outside school hours. For the

six teachers at Morrison, time was cited as the most common reason for not collaborating more fully.

The trust that is necessary to facilitate collaborative clinical supervision seems to develop slowly. Rosie and Robert had worked collaboratively for at least two years, and Francine and Fiona for several years. The other teachers in the study had worked together for less than one year. For this latter group, there were signs that trust was developing, especially where positive feedback had been received. Specifically here I am referring to Kate's comments about the effect of Karen's positive feed-back where she said that it made her realize that she was doing things correctly (p. 35: 2) and similar comments made by Jill when she identified an instance where Joan had given her positive feedback (p. 36: 22-23).

Collaboration and Friendship

In this study, Rosie and Robert, and Francine and Fiona, each described their collaboration in terms of friendship.Thinking about Glickman's statement that "true equality is the core of collaboration" (p. 145); Krajewski's (1993) notions of the importance of trust, respect, and mutual rapport for the development of collaboration; and Little's (1990) distinctions between types of collaboration, it seems that each of these elements could equally be applied to the phenomena of friendship.

By thinking about collaboration as a work-focussed friendship, new and valuable insights may be gained into issues surrounding the establishment and development of collaboration, and the advantages and disadvantages of collaborative models of professional development.

Changes and Improvements in Instruction

This study found evidence to corroborate Oberg's (1989) view that collaboration leads to improvements and changes in instruction. As we have seen, most teachers were able to identify specific improvements and changes that they had made. However, Oberg attributed these changes to teacher reflection. In this study, where changes and improvements occurred, it appears that they were due to the gradual development of trust that enabled teachers to share concerns that involved risk and to freely exchange ideas. These concerns, thinking specifically about Francine's comment that she wanted Fiona to observe her with a difficult class, were (a) unlikely to be raised by a teacher in a partnership where there was a lack of trust, that is, sufficient collaboration, and (b) likely to be in areas with the most potential and readiness for

change and improvement. The establishment of trust provides an environment that is conducive to the consideration of problem areas in instruction.

Further, thinking about the value Rosie placed on Robert's positive attitude, the support that exists in a well established collaborative relationship appears to provide encouragement for change. While the role of reflection should not be dismissed, other factors should be included in our understanding of the way in which collaboration leads to changes and improvements in instruction. The findings of this study suggest that these factors are: the importance of trust and its effects of facilitating risk-taking and the sharing of ideas; and the offering of positive feedback and support.

Perceptions, Focus, and Outcomes

This study was designed to address the question: What is the relationship between teacher's perceptions of their collaborative partnership and the focus and outcomes of their collaborative clinical supervision experiences? The following comments are offered by way of addressing this question.

Where the collaboration was perceived by both teachers as a friendship characterised by mutuality, trust, and support:

(a) Teachers focussed on a broad range of planning, teaching, and professional development activities.

(b) They took risks by sharing their fears and concerns with their partners--even inviting their colleague to observe them teaching their most troublesome class--and they admired and respected their partner.

(c) They gave advice and it was well received.

(d) They acknowledged the importance of administrative support and approval for their collaborative efforts.

Where relationships had not yet developed the same levels of trust and mutuality:

(a) Teachers tended to focus their classroom observations on specific aspects of instruction.

(b) During the post-observation conferences, the teachers tended to only comment on the agreed focus and they also tended to offer more praise and less advice than the teachers who enjoyed the more robust collaborations.

(c) Teachers were more inclined to attribute their failure to collaborate more often or more fully to external factors, most commonly, the absence of time.

Recommendations

On these basis of the preceding discussion and conclusions, the following recommendations for practice and research are offered.

1. Administrators need to be aware of the extra difficulties their partners may experience in working collaboratively with them. The administrator should expect the establishment of trust to be time consuming and should attempt to distance their responsibilities for evaluation from their collaborative work.

2. Administrators wishing to encourage collaborative clinical supervision partnerships to meet professional development goals should: (a) develop a system that allows teachers to have some input in the selection of their partners, (b) address the need for the provision of adequate time for conferencing, and (c) notice and encourage teachers' collaborative efforts.

3. Teachers wishing to develop collaborative relationships with their colleagues should be aware of the powerful norms of teacher autonomy and isolation and should proceed with caution, acknowledging and respecting their partners areas of expertise, demonstrating trustworthiness, providing positive feedback, and encouraging mutuality.

4. Researchers should address the issue of gender in collaborative relationships between teachers. Studies designed to identify what differences, if any, exist among different gender configurations of collaborative partnerships may yield valuable insights.

5. Practitioners and researchers should incorporate the notion of collaboration as work-focussed friendship in their thinking about collaboration. By adopting such a conceptualization, key elements of collaboration--trust, respect, mutuality, and sharing--as well as factors that influence the development and maintenance of collaboration can be considered and addressed.

References

Acheson, K. A., & Gall, M. D. (1992). Techniques in the clinical supervision of teachers: Preservice and inservice applications. (3rd ed.). New York: Longman.

Anderson, R. H. (1993). Clinical supervision: its history and current context. In R. H. Anderson & K. J. Snyder (Eds.). (1993). Clinical supervision: Coaching for higher performance. Lancaster, Pa: Technomicy.

Chrisco, I. M., (1989). Peer assistance works. Educational Leadership, 46 (8), 31-32.

Cogan, M. L. (1973). Clinical supervision. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Glatthorn, A. A. (1984). Differentiated supervision. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Glickman, C. D. (1990). Supervision of instruction: A developmental approach. (3rd Ed.) New York: Allyn and Bacon

Goldhammer, R., Anderson, R. H., & Krajewski, R. J. (1980). Special methods for the supervision of teachers. 2nd ed., New York: Holt.

Krajewski, R. J. (1993). The observation cycle: A methodology for coaching and problem solving. In R. H. Anderson & K. J. Snyder (Eds.), Clinical supervision: Coaching for higher performance. Lancaster, Pa: Technomicy.

Little, J. W. (1990). The persistence of privacy: Autonomy and initiative in teacher's professional relations. Teachers College Record, 91 (4), 509 - 536.

Oberg, A. A. (1989). Supervision as a creative act. Journal of Curriculum and Supervision, 5 (1), 60 - 69.

Raney, P., & Robbins, P. (1989). Professional growth and support through peer coaching. Educational Leadership, 46 (8): 35-38.

Sergiovanni, T.J. (1992). Moral authority and the regeneration of supervision. In C. Glickman (Ed.). Supervision in transition, 1992 yearbook of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (pp. 185-202). Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Sergiovanni, T.J., & Starratt, R.J. (1993). Supervision: A redefinition. (5th Ed.). New York: McGraw Hill.

Starratt, R.J. (1992). Perspectives and imperatives after supervision. Journal of Curriculum and Supervision, 8 (1): 77-86.